

NR, RB, GS

1/14/71

Dear Paul,

Your letter of 1/9, acknowledging receipt of seven mailing (meaning many, many more letters), going back to 12/28, with welcome enclosures, arrived this a.m. I make hurried response because I feel I must devote myself to an inexcusable oversight on my part discovered by Howard when he was here. I began what I consider to be the necessary before daylight. When it is all together, I'll send.

Your first paragraphs unintendely discloses the basis of several of the problems, and I begin addressing them. I may be close to alone in it among at least the senior members of the "critical" community, but the one thing not at question between you and me is your motive. Your sentence reads, "It would be a futility for me to defend my motives to you," and it would, not for the inferred paranoic reasons but because the one thing about you of which I remain without question is your motive. I think in this phrasing you disclose, subconsciously, a major part of the problem, namely your reaction to severe criticism the essence of which you have yet to address with anything but frivolity, as I see it. Your last sentence in this paragraph reads, "Because I had no desire of getting this material into the obviously irresponsible, I made no general distribution at all." I acknowledge that the use of xerox rather than carbons led to me assume a general distribution, especially because, as is usually your habit, you did not indicate the initials of those to whom you made limited distribution. You also say you sent copies to seven besides Arch. I do not know who all are, but I know that Bud and Sylvia and I account for 3, perhaps Gary the fourth.

Here we have another ambiguity for the existence of which [^] hold you responsible: who is, to you, an irresponsible? In the past you have refused to face this, as with your refusal to examine what Lifton was up to and in at least one case (let us not argue this, please) you made something I obtained available to him knowing that be it yesterday's classified sections, I desired the opposite. You persisted in regard poor sick Dave as a responsible, being able to do it by refusing to interest yourself in what he was up to and had been, and just refused to face the fact that were he not sick and also eaten by whatever bugs him, he has an immediate and undeviating record of at best causing divisiveness and is, without doubt, totally without scruple, as even his friends until now are unsolicitedly acknowledging to me.

But let me take two of the case -both, really - of which I know, Sylvia and Bud, both of whom you know I like despite strong and strongly-expressed differences between us over the years. Sylvia, largely, is latched to the 26, only because of her circumstances not desires. So, she is largely detached from most current knowledge and activities. Thus she has been feeding things to Sprague, whereupon they appear, out of context, and in a manner innocently but perfectly designed to kill ongoing work. For the most part, Bud doesn't know a fink from an angel, witness his willingness to be open and helpful to Skolnick, despite my frequent warning to make perfunctory checks with me first when new people approach him. Bud stuff is open to Sprague and others, based on the record. I've not discussed Sprague with him recently. I first of all, despite thinking he is a very nice guy, do not consider Sprague a "responsible", for he has consistently and blindly been quite the opposite and it has to be assumed that he feeds everything he gets to JG, which above all you said you do not want and you should have known. So, if Sprague, to take but a single example, was not among your seven, there was every reason to believe it immaterial, for here are two sources from whom he could be expected to have gotten your memo.

Now is your intelligence in question, which is part of the problem, for I think I am correct in assuming it to be of a high order and therefore more concerned when you do what I regard as a stupid thing. I do not carry the argument of the previous par. further because I think it alone amply proves the complaint I made to you, that what you

did did could not more perfectly have been designed to accomplish the opposite of what you said you wanted. Particularly with two things: the hazard inherent in this whole declassification and the apparently prevalent changed attitude toward you as a result of both your melon work and your subsequent reaction, was it is quite wrong and equally below what your friends have a right to expect of your intelligence and perception, so amply displayed to all of us over the years. So, aside from the great jeopardy needless run, you have added fuel to suspicions about you. Whether or not these concern you personally, you cannot be unaware of the fact that this makes real collaboration between you and others difficult if not with some impossible. That I very much do not want, and I presume you also do not.

Without checking all I've written you, I believe this is the essence of what I did write and what you in this letter do ignore. It is no response to say you sent out only 7 copies and were pure in heart and spirit.

When and why you "since repeated this caution to those who got the letter to Arch", you do not say, but if it is after hearing from me, then I did right to take the time to write. But there is one to whom you sent this letter to whom you did not send this repeated caution: me. I do not seek to pry into those you consider "responsible", but I think if I am to be able to fend off what you may have guaranteed, I'd like to know, especially if Sprague and Lifton are included, directly or in ways you think it likely can be the same. Also Newcomb, of whose potentialities I am aware whether or not you are (and motive is not a question with me about him or Sprague).

By now you know the arrangements have been made.

Part of the remaining problem was your fault. You did not tell me what and only what the Archives has sent you. I did, immediately, to you. I had every reason to believe and none not to believe that it also contained the Ferrie stuff. But the Valle stuff alone should have prompted caution on your part, and I repeat you could have spoken to me almost immediately for but \$1.00, which you do have....You now know more about the Ferrie pages and will know still more, for they gave me maybe half and I do not yet have all that my good hunch disclosed.

The paragraph on the unofficial Ferrie material: To this day neither you nor Jim have done anything with it, yet when you were here you wanted this so that you could go to work on it immediately. I have written about it several times. However, if Jim has any conclusions, beliefs or hunches on this, I should know as fast as possible if they are to serve immediate purposes. This has, after all, Paul been many months, maybe a half year, which makes it hard to believe it was the pressure of other work. I acknowledge that doing nothing could so be explained, but not silence....I'll be getting CDs 1084 and 1085, so send no copies. But if you make notes, please do....I don't now recall, but if I asked for the return of the Freedom of Information material, please do not forget to. ...You and court: why do you not ask Mitchell for what we know is still withheld on the Valle investigation, the New York stuff?...I can understand the need for curtailing the time you put into this. However, knowing my reaction to your long silences of the past, as with the ~~thelans~~ (you still haven't told me what kind they were, or whether or not green) you might have sent me a card saying "busy", thus I'd not have felt as reflected in the letter I wrote you about this yesterday. ...I'll ask Bud for some of those carbon forms. Or, I'll try and include a dupe for return mailing in the future...Entry 25 list: hasty glance suggests I went over this in late 66 or early 67. Thanks...What would it cost to get a copy of all you got last trip, single page size?...I could relax more and have fewer frustrations (thanks for the wish) if such things as this didn't happen as needlessly and as often as they do. You have no monopoly....I assume you will notify me immediately if the melonry becomes other than quiescent. It is not necessary to respond to the other arguments. They were for guidance, not argument, something I often found unwelcome at your age, but please do inform me where I might find hazard and please try and avoid such things henceforth, Best,